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*A Social Study of the Russian German.* (University Studies.)

By HATTIE PLUM WILLIAMS. Lincoln, Neb., 1916. Pp. 101.

This is an excellent and exact study of what might be called the double-hyphen immigrant. Germans who have lived a hundred and fifty years in the Volga district of Russia, entirely cut off from any connection with the German Empire, now for part of a generation have constituted one-eighth of the population of Lincoln. In Russia their church preserved their identity. The question before us is whether their uniqueness will long continue. A large amount of well-balanced material has been collected displaying customs, vital and social statistics, and tendencies. The thoroughness with which it has been done makes one hope for its extension to include the Russian German from other regions, as for example that about Odessa, which was settled at the same time. One cannot help being somewhat disappointed because the study is essentially objective. Familiar as the author is with the people themselves, the reader does not get inside them so as to see their psychological life. One should not expect more than is possible, but it would be very helpful if we could find just what has been the influence of the Russian environment during these hundred and fifty years, and this might be profitably compared with the relatively isolated communities of Pennsylvania "Dutch" who represent a similar period and condition.

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*A Layman's Handbook of Medicine. With Special Reference to Social Workers.* By RICHARD C. CABOT, M.D. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1916. Pp. xviii+524. \$2.00.

This "layman's handbook" will prove both a delight and a torment to laymen and social workers—a delight because of its sanity of tone and a torment because of its scarcity of specific rules. The author has only one evident fad and that is a wholesome skepticism regarding all fads. This spirit of scientific doubt characterizes the book throughout. The author refuses to commit himself to either camp in controverted questions, whether it be as to the harmfulness of tobacco or as to the causes of rheumatism. The intelligent reader will be very grateful for this quality, though he will be surprised to find a physician of such distinction so frequently telling the benighted layman that as a matter of fact the doctors themselves are in almost complete ignorance about so many

things. For this reason the book may not meet with approval among some of the medical profession; but one can say with assurance that, if it is widely read by the public, doctor's calls will be less numerous both because of less need and because of more popular wisdom in matters of health.

The book seems very inclusive, treating as it does all diseases known to the layman and many others, and devoting chapters to "Anatomy and Physiology," the diseases of all parts of the body, and such topics as "Diet-Constipation," "Infectious Diseases," "Poisons," "Industrial Diseases," "Emergencies—Home Medicine—Personal Hygiene," and "Miscellaneous Ailments, Trivial and Severe."

The book will prove unsatisfactory to many because it is chary of explicit advice, but to others this will be the book's most delightful trait. The author works from the generalization that each person is highly individual in matters of health and disease and that consequently general rules are as likely to be wrong as right. For example, we do not all need the same amount of sleep, but we should all get what we need; we each require different amounts and kinds of food and we should eat what we individually need in order to make us weigh what we ought to weigh; as to chewing, Fletcherism is a fad already defunct; iced water in moderate amounts is not a hindrance to digestion for most people; our stomach troubles, moreover, are usually not in our stomachs at all, but in our brain or kidneys or liver or heart; and, besides, the stomach is not nearly as important in digestion as commonly assumed, since its function is mainly mechanical and can be dispensed with entirely on occasion. This sort of discussion will not satisfy the crank or extremist, but it is doubtless the only safe sort of advice to put in the hands of the average layman.

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*Retail Store Management.* By PAUL H. NYSTROM. Chicago: La Salle Extension University, 1917. Pp. viii+242.

This is a treatment of a multitude of practical questions relating to retailing in general, whether carried on in the corner grocery or in the great department store. The object of the book is to bring up-to-date methods to the attention of the vast number of retailers who now work by rule-of-thumb, tradition, hearsay, and inspiration. It is intensely matter-of-fact, not going into theoretical discussions even where they would be both interesting and significant. There is consequently much